

Child Fingerprinting / Child Identification

The Rocklin Police Department fingerprints and photographs children and provides parents with "Child Identification Kits" several times throughout the year at numerous community events. Please contact Police Community Programs Coordinator Mike Nottoli at (916) 625-5416 to find out when and where the next event will be held. There is no charge for this service.

Please note that the "Child Identification Kits", photographs, and fingerprints are turned over to the parents/guardians and are not filed at or maintained by the Rocklin Police Department.

You may download a "Child Identification Kit" by scrolling down to the end of the "Child Safety Tips" material and clicking on the "Child Identification Kit" subheading.

Child Safety Tips from the Rocklin Police Department

Here are some suggestions that will help you (1) protect your children and (2) improve their awareness level:

Protecting Your Children

You and your children should understand that awareness, avoidance, and prevention are the most important principles of personal safety and self defense. This is especially true for small children because they may have difficulty recognizing dangerous situations, and defending themselves against adults and older teenagers.

Fill out and keep a Rocklin Police Department Child Identification Kit on hand for each child. The kit includes a place for a current photograph, a hair sample, and a fingerprint card. A current picture is one of the most valuable things you can have on hand if your child is lost or abducted. The police department does not keep a database of child fingerprints, so if you do fingerprint your children, keep the cards in a safe place.

Keep your kids close to you. Having your child hold your hand or wear a safety harness attached to you are two good ways to keep them close when you are in a public place.

It takes a great deal of concentration to keep watch over children. It can be especially difficult when there are multiple kids and multiple parents. It is very important that there be clear instructions as to which parents are responsible for maintaining "watch" during specific time periods. This assignment should change periodically to allow for breaks and down time.

When left unsupervised, small children have been known to crawl or walk right out of their own residence. Therefore, it may be necessary and advisable to install internal latches on doors that are mounted high enough so small children cannot reach them. A door and window chime system can also alert you to the fact that someone has come in or out. Do not install a double cylinder deadbolt lock (a lock with a key on the inside). These locks can prevent children and adults from exiting during a fire or other emergency.

Small children participating in group activities should be assigned a buddy. The buddy concept means that one child watches out for the other, and doesn't go anywhere without his/her buddy.

Children are susceptible to many dangers around the home. Take the time to inspect every part of your home (inside and out) and make sure to remove or mitigate potential hazards.

Children who fall into swimming pools, ponds, bathtubs, buckets, fountains, aquariums, and even toilets can drown in a matter of a few seconds. Swimming pools should be properly fenced and gated. Swimming pool alarms that ring when someone enters the water can be a great investment.

Make sure suffocation hazards such as ice chests and plastic bags are properly secured and are not accessible to children. Small children are naturally curious, so keep them out of areas where they may crawl into dangerous places. Refrigerators, freezers, driers and other appliances also pose “crawl-in” hazards.

Remove choking hazards such as coins, buttons, candies, etc. from the reach of infants and small children.

Since small children like to climb, make sure furniture and appliances are secured so they will not fall on children.

When cooking, keep pots and pans away from the front edge of the stove whenever possible, and turn handles away from where they can be easily grabbed.

Keep cleaners, chemicals, medicines, etc., out of the reach of children and preferably in a locked cabinet.

Take precautions around electricity. Make sure to remove all appliances from around sinks, bathtubs, pools, etc. Use special electrical outlet plugs to keep children from touching or placing objects inside electrical sockets.

Store firearms in a locked safe or container. Using trigger locks and keeping ammunition separate from the firearm can also help avoid serious accidents.

Children under 18 years of age must wear a properly secured and fastened helmet when they ride a bicycle or motorized scooter. Children under 16 years old may not ride motorized scooters.

Children who are under 6 years of age or 60 pounds must use a child safety restraint system when being transported in a motor vehicle.

Do not leave young children in a vehicle while you are shopping, dropping off things at the cleaners, etc. It is unsafe and it is against the law.

No matter how safe or secure your street feels, it is still risky to let small children play in the front yard without adult supervision. It only takes a moment for a stranger to enter an area and abduct a child.

Consider allowing older children to carry personal sound alarms that they can activate if a stranger confronts them. These alarms can be heard from hundreds of feet away, and can help to scare off an abductor and to alert parents of a problem. Parents need to make sure their children are mature enough to carry such a device. These alarms are loud enough to damage eardrums, so care needs to be taken to make sure children use them properly.

Get to know who your children are spending time with. Write down their names, addresses, and phone numbers, and familiarize yourself with their parents. If you allow your children to visit a friend's house, meet the family first to make sure you are comfortable with the supervision and the environment.

Map out safe and well-traveled routes for your children. Do not allow them to take short cuts through dangerous areas.

Do not allow your children to carry, wear or ride anything with their first or last name written on it (in large letters). This can provide a criminal with your child's identification. A stranger can get their attention by calling out their name, or even look up their last name in a phone book to see where they live.

Use common sense when creating a phone message for your answering machine. Don't advertise that you have kids, and don't let children take part in recording the message.

Leaving small toys outside in the front yard advertises that children are present in your household. It can also create an opportunity for a stranger to lure your child away with his/her own toys.

Take the time to secure your home. Leaving doors and windows unlocked creates opportunities for criminals to enter your home. Invest in a burglar alarm for extra security.

Form a Neighborhood Watch group so you and your neighbors can watch out for each other.

Increasing the Awareness of Your Children

Teach your children that a stranger is anyone they do not know very well. Stress the fact that strangers can be male, female, young, old, dirty, clean cut, etc. A stranger can be someone they see everyday in the neighborhood. Make sure they understand that most strangers are good people, not bad people.

Make sure your child knows his/her full name, address, phone number, and his/her parents' names.

Tell them how important it is to keep a safe distance from strangers. Explain that adults can move and cover ground very quickly, so it is important that children begin to move away from strangers before they get too close.

If children are playing in the front yard and a stranger in a vehicle or on foot begins to approach them, make sure the children know to run back in the house, lock the door, and tell an adult what happened. This same principle applies at school. They should run to the closest classroom or office and seek assistance.

Teach children to stay away from people in vehicles, and to never get into a vehicle with a stranger.

Teach children to walk on the sidewalk against traffic so it is easier to see strangers who are approaching in cars. If they have to run away, teach them to run in the opposite direction of traffic so the stranger will either have to back up or turn the vehicle around to follow them.

Children should use the buddy system whenever possible. Kids who are alone are much more likely to be a target.

Teach kids about the "tricks" strangers may use to lure them away. These include offers of candy or money, asking for help in finding an address or a lost pet, or saying their parents were in an accident and they were sent to pick them up.

Parents and children should agree on a "secret code word" in case the parents have to send someone else to pick them up in a real emergency. Even then, it is a good idea for children to have a trusted adult verify the emergency situation.

Teach children the difference between “good touching” and “bad touching.” Encourage them not to be afraid to talk about these issues. Make sure they understand that “bad touching” can also be done by someone who may not be a stranger.

Teach your children what to do if they get lost in a store or other public place. For example, in a store situation, they should contact an employee at a cash register or customer service desk. Explain to your child that most stores have a public address system so they can page the parents to come to wherever the child is found. Tell your children to never leave the store if they get lost.

Children should know that bad strangers might ask them to keep something “a secret”. They should not keep secrets with strangers, and they should always tell a trusted adult what happened.

Children should know what to do if a stranger confronts them. If a child is approached or bothered by a stranger, their main objective should be to get away fast and run to a safe place where a responsible adult can help them. They also need to know how important it is for them to tell an adult what happened and to report the incident to the police as soon as possible.

If a stranger attempts to grab your child, let them know that it is okay for them to punch, kick, scratch, bite, etc., in order to get away from that person. However, make sure they understand that prevention, not physical resistance, is the most important thing that will keep them safe. In most cases, an adult can easily overpower a small child who is physically resisting.

If someone tries to bother or abduct your child in a public place, your child should know that it's okay to “create a scene”. They need to know specifically what to say to get the attention of others around them. For example, let's say a stranger is attempting to kidnap a child from a crowded store. If the child simply yells and screams, bystanders might assume that the child misbehaved and was being removed from the store by their parent(s). However, if the child says one or more of the following phrases, people in the area will know exactly what is happening. Make sure your child knows to speak loudly so everyone will hear it. a. “Leave me alone, you're a stranger.” b. “Get away from me. You're not my mother.” c. “Help me! I'm being kidnapped by a stranger.”

The Internet, email and chat rooms can pose dangers to your children. Criminals who pose as children may try to communicate with your children. They may say they are 10 years old, but they may actually be a 35 year old trying to find out information about your children. We recommend that you supervise your children when they are on the computer. Tell them never to give out any information about themselves, their family, their home, their school, etc.

The same thing applies to answering the telephone. Children should never give out any information, and should also not tell a stranger they are home alone. They may say their parents can't come to the phone right now, or better yet, let the answering machine screen incoming calls so they can choose which people to talk to.

After you go over these things with your children, you should test them to see if they understood what you told them. One of the best ways to test children is to create an imaginary scenario for them and ask them what they would do. This will give you an excellent opportunity to see what they know and how they think through different problems and situations.

For example, ask your children what they would do if they were at school and a neighbor who lives down the street came to the school and said, “Your sister had an accident and had to go to the hospital. Your parents are at the hospital now and they sent me to take you there. Let's go!” You might also ask them what they would do if a lady approached them with a picture of a dog and a \$20.00 bill in hand and said, “I lost my dog and I just have to find him. His name is Max, and I will give you \$20.00 if you help me find him.”

